

CHILD

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JUVENILE-DELINQUENCY ISSUE

WHAT DO WE WANT FOR OUR DELINQUENT CHILDREN?

WHEN A CHILD gets in trouble with the law, unless there are services available in the community to help that child find his way back to normal and healthy development, he is apt to take just the opposite road and end up in a career of crime. More than half of our adult criminals were juvenile delinquents.

Then, you may ask, why don't we have the community services to prevent the development of these behavior problems and to keep delinquent children from going from bad to worse?

One of the principal reasons why we don't have adequate services for the care and treatment of delinquent children is that there has not been a sufficient understanding on the part of the public of why they are necessary, what kind of services they should be, and what it means to a child to be treated as if he were a criminal.

Because of lack of public understanding, there has been lack of public support for the quality and quantity of services these children need.

A good deal has been written in the effort to tell the public about these services, but sometimes this material has been complex and difficult to visualize. Many of us have to see things before we can believe them or feel them.

Often people say that more emphasis should be on prevention. We agree. But public apathy with re-

spect to the total problem of how juvenile delinquents are made will not be overcome by talk of prevention. Sometimes the end result of a disease or social ill must be studied and the costs to society dramatized before firm steps to prevention can be taken with public support. Then, too, children who are sick cannot be left to suffer.

If we were to raise the quality of practices in our handling of juvenile delinquents up to the level of the best jobs being done here and there over the country, I am convinced we would give many delinquent boys and girls a much greater chance than they now have to find a satisfying and useful role in society.

There is a practical program of action we can take to improve our treatment of juvenile delinquents. It calls, first, for over-all planning by States and communities to explore conditions, develop a blueprint of objectives, and work particularly on:

1. Aiding the police in developing special services for children;
2. Getting juveniles out of jail and providing proper detention facilities;
3. Providing the courts with adequately trained probation officers;
4. Helping training schools to get qualified personnel and additional facilities they need.

Movement ahead in these directions calls for a single public agency in every State with clear responsibility

for insuring teamwork amongst the various services for delinquent children and sound relationships between these services and child-welfare services for all children. Each State will want to work out its own kind of State-wide organization. Training of personnel, too, must be stepped up, and there must be more adequate financing of public services for delinquent children.

Through its newly organized Juvenile Delinquency Branch and the Special Juvenile Delinquency Project which is working closely with the Bureau, citizens and agencies will get increased help so they can move ahead on programs of improvement.

Every reader of this issue of *The Child* can help greatly in this effort, even if it is no more than by spreading "the news." Will you, as a first step, get this issue to the attention of 10 people in your community? Perhaps you can make this issue the focus of discussion at a coming meeting of one of the organizations in which you are active.

The Children's Bureau wants to keep in touch with every group that joins in this campaign. So when your organization gets going, won't you drop us a line?

Martha M. Eliot

MARTHA M. ELIOT, M.D.,
Chief, Children's Bureau

EYEWITNESSES TO THE TOLL OF DELINQUENCY

A juvenile-court judge, the director of a detention home, a police chief, the superintendent of a training school—four men whose everyday concern is the prevention or treatment of juvenile delinquency—tell about their experiences in this work and of the problems they face

JUVENILE COURT

LEO B. BLESSING

Judge of the Juvenile Court, Parish of Orleans, New Orleans, La.

IF ENOUGH SPACE were available, I could list many problems and many unmet needs of our juvenile court in New Orleans, and they would undoubtedly be those of every juvenile court in the Nation. I know of none completely satisfied with its situation.

Some of our needs are so pressing, the function of the court as an agency for good in the community is vitally affected.

For example, at the present time we are unable to plan intelligently for the detention of children who are awaiting the court's decision as to what should be done with them. This period of detention can be a new and shaking experience for a child. We should try to profit from every moment of it in our treatment program.

But our present detention-care arrangement is makeshift and unsatisfactory. We are using quarters in other institutions, to the detriment of the care of their regular inmates, and sometimes we are forced to detain obstreperous juveniles in the parish jail.

The absence of a treatment center for disturbed juveniles is sorely and frequently felt. Yet there is not even a faint stirring of recognition of this need by the community.

Our case loads have grown considerably in recent times. This is

more the result of increased service potential than of increased delinquency. We are being called on more than ever before by other social agencies to help solve their problems, and parents are now voluntarily coming to us with their children who chronically misbehave. We welcome this confidence, but it often taxes our court facilities beyond their capacity.

Another problem is the legal segregation of races in our State. This

makes it necessary for us to supply separate accommodations and facilities for Negro and white delinquents. There is at present only one State institution for white boys and girls, only one State institution for Negro boys, and no public institution of any kind for the care of delinquent Negro girls.

Community understanding most important

However, the greatest problem facing the New Orleans Juvenile Court and, for that matter, every juvenile court, I believe, is failure to receive complete and wholehearted acceptance by the community it is intended to serve. It may seem strange and perhaps even absurd that a community should have to be urged to accept one of its own creatures—a crea-

The informal procedure used in this juvenile court helps to make the young delinquent feel relaxed and makes it easier for the judge to work effectively with him. The judge relies heavily on the skilled services of the trained probation officer who is attached to his court.



ture submissive to its will and completely at its mercy. But too often juvenile courts are simply poor little Cinderellas without the protection of a fairy godmother.

As it exists in the laws of most States, the juvenile court is a social agency within the framework of the law. It is the hybrid result of tempering the law's sternness with mercy and understanding.

In the chain of events that makes up the life of a delinquent child, being brought before the juvenile court is but a single link. However, it is an important link.

I know parents who search about for the best possible schools and teachers for their children. They buy the best clothes and most wholesome food obtainable. When sickness occurs, they insist on only the best pediatrician to attend their children. But they pay little attention to their juvenile court. At every available opportunity I ask these parents: "Why do you not insist on the maintenance of a good juvenile court for children for whom you want the best of every other kind of care? Why, indeed, this neglect of the juvenile court?"

A great deterrent to community understanding and acceptance of the juvenile court is the fact that the more active and prosperous elements in the population have little contact with the court. The majority of our children come from a level of society that has no voice and no weight in community affairs. Many of their families are so entirely engaged in eking out an existence that they cannot take time to champion the cause of community agencies even when such agencies affect the futures of their own children.

The vocal group in community affairs usually take little interest in the court because they do not expect to use its facilities.

Fortunately, not all children come to the juvenile court, but any child within the juvenile-court age limit might get into trouble with the law so long as he is forced to live in the artificial, accelerated economic environment of our typical urban com-

munities. And every child remains a potential victim of delinquency so long as our social services are inadequate to check the delinquency that exists in a community.

Perhaps the best way to create a sense of community responsibility for these services is to help the citizens of our communities understand the importance of juvenile delinquency: how it springs from basic unhealthy conditions in the life of a community, and how, unless checked, it can spread.

Not many people would be willing to gamble their whole life earnings on the flip of a card, but many communities are taking just as great a chance when they permit the whole future lives of many of their children to be decided by a poorly trained, inadequately staffed, and weakly led juvenile court.

If we can arouse the individual members of a community to an understanding of their responsibilities for the proper development of their juvenile court, we shall then be guaranteed an adequate court and all the necessary outside facilities for carrying out a successful treatment plan.

Expanded New Orleans needs expanded services

In New Orleans, where the population had been more or less static at the half-million mark for many years (due in part to expansion-limiting water boundaries and in part to a lack of aggressive planning), the juvenile court was for a long time shamefully neglected by the com-

munity and was let stagnate in hopelessness and frustration. But the fight we have made for our court during the past 4 years has brought us recognition and is beginning to return dividends.

We have won an increased appropriation, a trained probation staff (though it is still too small), and construction of physical quarters that have added much to effective work and judicial dignity and have been helpful in gaining additional community recognition and support.

But the fight is not finished. It is never-ending, for a good juvenile court must be progressive, flexible in program, and far-seeing. Already we are planning for our future needs—a program that will "sell" the community on the value of the juvenile court and the need to protect our children. With reclaimed swamplands now available for industrial development and because of the courageous leadership of our mayor, New Orleans has expanded considerably within a few years' time, but our court has failed to expand in keeping with this increase in population, interest, and problems. We are already alarmingly understaffed. The court's services are being taxed beyond their capacity, and we should be expanding and planning for additional community service. This is our most immediate problem, and we shall continue with courage and persistence to seek complete community acceptance as a major step toward its solution.

DETENTION

STEPHAN H. KNEISEL

Executive Director of the Essex County Parental School, Newark, N. J.

THE COMMENT I've been hearing for 25 years, that "Everybody talks about juvenile delinquency, but nobody does anything about it," does have some truth in it. I believe the truth of the statement arises largely from the fact that this social ill has not been given the same

amount of attention and focus that has been given such hazards to children as infantile paralysis, tuberculosis, and various physical handicaps. It is therefore encouraging to have a special juvenile-delinquency project of Nation-wide scope.

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In some communities delinquents who require temporary detention, pending court hearing, are held in jail—often with criminals. This kind of detention care offers nothing in the way of rehabilitation.

Detention can be a constructive experience. In this home young delinquents follow a varied program. They are offered individual counseling, and their educational and recreational needs are taken care of.

porary detention for delinquent children. This is a highly specialized child-care service, little known and less understood by the community, and only recently emerging from a jail philosophy to that of social treatment of the emotionally ill offender. My primary concern in this article will be to comment on the problems of temporary detention, but I should like to point out that these observations will take into account other problems in this field that I have met with during 25 years' experience working with children in trouble. [Mr. Kneisel has been a school teacher, a parole officer, a social worker in a court psychiatric clinic, an administrator of day-care and nursery-school programs, the director of a council of social agencies, and during the past 8 years the administrator of juvenile-detention facilities in three areas of two States.—ED.]

Consistent with the recent reports on national statistics, the rate of commitments to our little detention facility in 1951 showed a 20-percent increase. If our experience for the first 6 months of this year continues, 1952 will show a substantial increase in de-

linquency over the previous year. In fact, during the month of May we were at an all-time high in the rate of daily admissions, exceeded only by the first day of June, when 18 children were admitted in one day. The impact of an additional 18 children in a home that is meant to accommodate 50 can well be imagined, particularly when the rate of intake for the previous week had been almost as high. We were sending our overflow to the adult house of detention. We simply did not have the bed space.

Architect's plans for a more adequate juvenile-detention facility—to accommodate 80 children—are presently before county officials. We hope for final approval before long. But if the rate of intake continues to increase, we may find that at peak periods we'll have to continue to use the adult facilities.

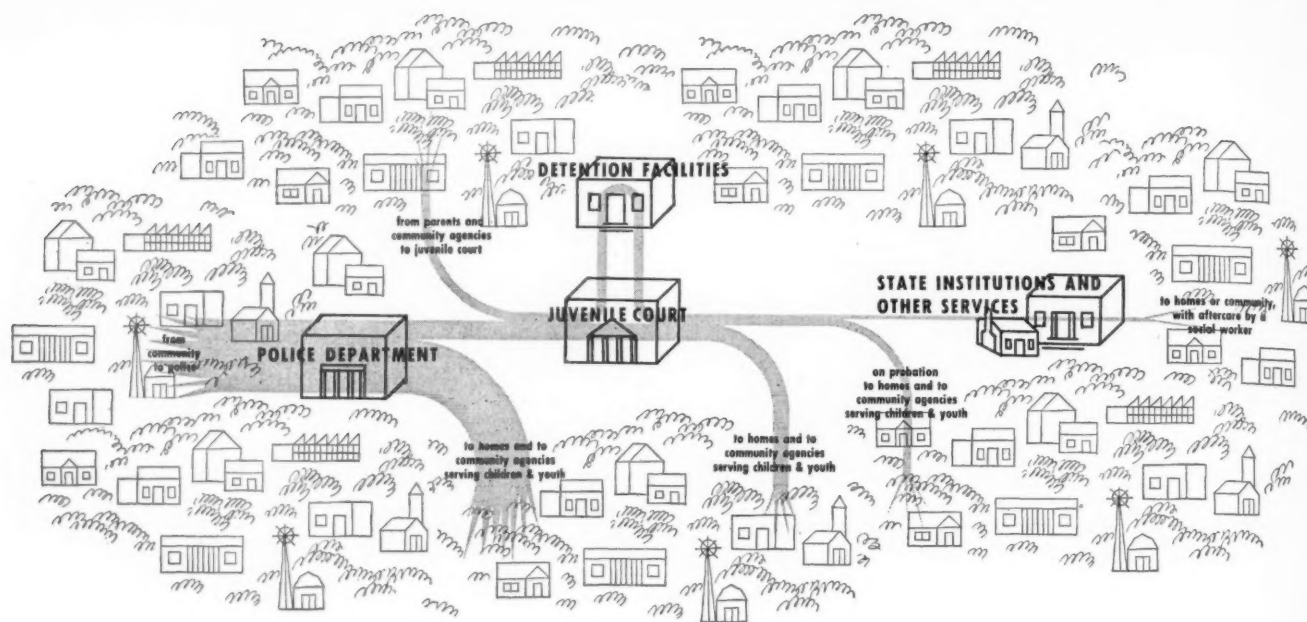
We get children who should not be here

We in children's work have long been aware of the trauma involved in separating a child from his home for foster-home placement. Much time is therefore devoted to preparing the child for the separation and place-

ment. And we recognize and accept that, despite our best efforts, there will still be deep disturbance. Yet, to my knowledge, throughout the years there has been little awareness of our concern for the deep trauma that results from forced separation and placement in a detention facility, an experience that sometimes drives children to emotional outbursts bordering on the psychotic, or even to attempts at suicide. The community and its agencies have not yet begun to understand fully the injustices ignorantly committed against children in this way.

For this reason I urge that detention be used only when it has been determined by competent authority that no other resource exists in the community to provide temporary care for the child and that it is in the best interest of the child and of the community for him to be detained. The role of the detention facility should be limited to the detention and care of children who are too unstable and ill emotionally to be permitted to remain at large in the community. It should be the first step in an expeditious and integrated treatment process.

Children in trouble with the law—where they come from and where they go



The detention facility should cease to be a juvenile jail. Too often it functions as the "back room" of the police station; or as the temporary "dumping ground" for agencies too understaffed to follow through in planning for the return of a child to his own home or to a foster home; or as the agent to serve the personal vindictiveness and animosity of a particular official toward a particular child.

Detention care should be temporary

Despite our best efforts some children are held in detention far too long. I make this observation without prejudice to my present facility, for it pertains as well to institutions I previously served, and, in fact, it constitutes one of the gravest concerns of most administrators of temporary detention facilities. Along with the recent increased rate of placement in my present facility, the number of days of care would have increased correspondingly but for the consistent effort on the part of the juvenile court and other local agencies to support the intent of temporary deten-

tion by keeping the length of stay at a minimum. Consequently, although intake went up, the average length of stay dropped from 11 days to 10.

It is understood that the court should know something about a child before making a final disposition. The information required may vary from a social study to the result of psychiatric observation and diagnosis. However, although we have come to accept the need for knowing something of the child, we have not yet begun to meet the need to do it expeditiously, if the child in detention is to be constructively served.

Few communities are equipped to undertake such studies expeditiously, and weeks can run into months before studies are completed and a court disposition is made. Meanwhile the child in detention lives in a purgatory of anxiety, despite the best efforts of skilled workers and the best of physical facilities.

As with my first institution, my present institution is in a community whose child-serving resources are probably at least equal to those of most communities, yet both com-

munities lack a psychiatric hospital to which emotionally disturbed children may be referred on an immediate and emergency basis for study and observation. One institution with which I once worked had the advantage of the services of a children's pavilion in a psychiatric hospital. I had forgotten how desperately such a resource is needed until I came to my present institution and found that no such service existed.

Treatment resources vitally important

Once a diagnosis has been made and a treatment plan determined, the child should be moved to the treatment facility promptly. There can be no justification for continuing a child in temporary detention for weeks and months once a plan has been made.

The result of study may indicate that the kind of service needed by a child is that provided by a foster home. In court the child may be told that he will be placed in such a home, rather than being sent to an institution. The immediate reaction of the child is apt to be joy and new trust in the sincerity of the adult world.

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But as week follows dreary week and no foster home is forthcoming, the child's mood turns to bitterness and defiance. If a foster home is finally located, is it any wonder that the child no longer responds? Often the home is *not* found and, after weeks of waiting, the child is simply sent to the State school.

If a foster home is not to be used, the study may indicate that intensive psychiatric treatment is needed—either in an institution or in the community. Again the question is: Where can such service be found? Treatment institutions for older children are so rare that even where they exist they constitute demonstration projects rather than community resources.

The present dearth of treatment facilities in all communities too often results in ultimate commitment to that catch-all, the State school, which most often is not staffed to give psychiatric treatment. If State schools are to continue to be the major resource for the long-term detention of children with serious character and behavior disorders, steps must be taken to make it possible for these institutions to offer the treatment and care necessary for the children committed to their care.

I know of no community—city,

county, State—that is providing the varied and integrated services necessary for the differential treatment of the various types of behavior we lump under the head of "juvenile delinquency." This is a blanket term without much meaning—much like the word "sickness." We have come to understand that though infantile paralysis is a sickness, it is different from tuberculosis both in symptoms and in treatment. And we accept the fact that although infantile paralysis, tuberculosis, and other diseases are all "sicknesses," each has to be

treated differently, and that treatment is difficult and expensive. But we seem not to have accepted the same inevitable conclusion for juvenile delinquency.

The primary answer to the problem of the prevention and proper treatment of delinquent behavior is, I feel, the gaining of an enlightened and enthusiastic public understanding and support of the kinds of programs and services that are so vitally needed by those children who, because of their behavior, are termed juvenile delinquents.

POLICE

L. D. MORRISON

Chief of Police, Houston, Tex.

THE RESPONSIBILITY of the Police Department to help prevent juvenile delinquency and crime flows naturally from its fundamental obligation to protect the people and property of the entire community.

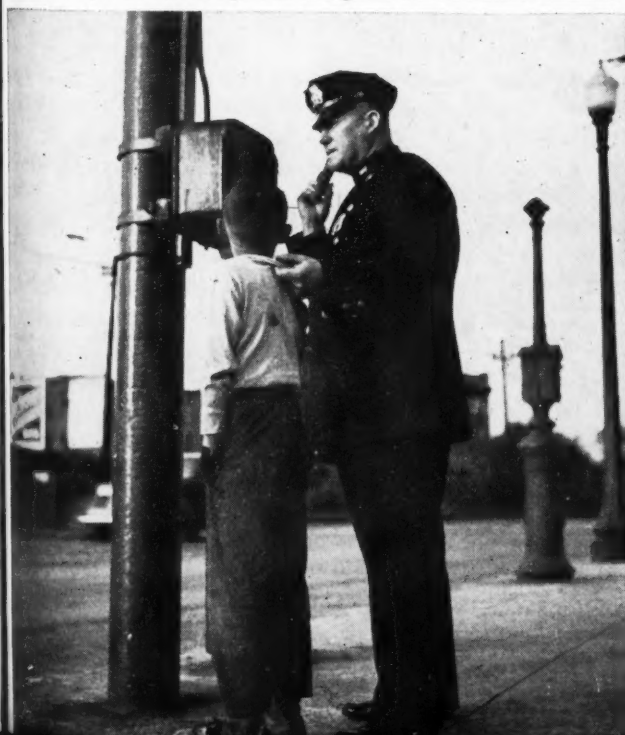
Police administrators have recognized their grave responsibility, and, as a result, many of them have established a special unit or division with-

in their departments to meet the needs of those children in the community who come to their attention because of misbehavior.

Here in Houston we established such a division many years ago. It is called the Crime Prevention Division. Through this division we attempt to carry out our responsibility for delinquency control in a growing metropolis.

In your community, when a child is picked up by a policeman for misbehavior, is he handled just as though he were an adult criminal?

The juvenile-aid policeman who is taking this delinquent boy to a detention home has been trained to work constructively with children.





A prison-like atmosphere in an institution makes it hard for the staff to win the boys' cooperation. They are apt to feel like criminals.



A pleasant and homelike air about a training school helps the boys to feel that they are there to be rehabilitated rather than punished.

It is hardly necessary to say how valuable such a division is. Children are the community's most precious asset, and it is worth our every effort to help prevent future criminal careers.

Police officers must always be aware of the fact that a young person's entire future may depend upon his first contact with law-enforcing officers. If a child is treated firmly, but with kindness and understanding, much can be accomplished toward making a good future citizen out of a potential threat to society.

Advances made with difficulty

We are vitally conscious of our failings and of our difficulties. Dealing with children has made us feel a special need for perfectionism, and we make an all-out endeavor in our work with them.

We make every effort, therefore, to select carefully the personnel who staff our Crime Prevention Division. In the not-too-dim past, assignment to the juvenile division was literally banishment to isolation. The most inept officers were to be found in most police juvenile agencies, working half-heartedly and without enthusiasm.

Today, because of the influx of young, well-trained, and energetic officers into the police field, the picture is more encouraging. No longer is assignment to the Crime Prevention Division considered a casting away of the officers, but is a choice and favorable experience.

We have been most fortunate in having what we consider the most modern police administration building in the South. A generous citizenry has spared no expense in building and equipping a modern workshop for police activities. Consequently we have been able to provide more than adequate facilities to house a growing Crime Prevention Division. Occupying a complete wing, the Division is able to carry out its function in almost total separation from the adult divisions. This healthful atmosphere affords us a greater opportunity to remove the damaging stigma of police procedure from the child's experience in the police building.

It is imperative that we work in close harmony with the many public and private agencies that are concerned with the welfare of children. We want community agencies to feel

free to use juvenile-police services. The juvenile-aid officer must, to discharge his duties properly, refer many children to these agencies. Unless they understand our function as a discovery and referral agency, and unless we know about their facilities, the efforts of both would be for naught. For that reason, we are invited to participate in the round-table planning of the Council of Social Agencies and of the Community Council.

Some children, of course, cannot be referred by police officers to community agencies, but must be taken to the juvenile court. Naturally the Crime Prevention Division officers give wholehearted support to efforts to improve the official public services for adjudged delinquents.

In reviewing our Texas procedure we learned that about one-half of our boys and girls who are adjudged delinquent are, in later life, committed to adult prisons. This indictment of our procedure led to the creation of the Texas Youth Development Council, a new and revolutionary scheme, which promises to be one of the Nation's most workable plans for rehabilitating delinquent children.

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Narcotics and wild drivers

Much concern has been exhibited in our community in recent times over the use of narcotics by our teenagers. Certainly a southern city such as ours—a focal point for narcotic traffic northward—might be a most fertile ground for inducing youth to become addicted. But our experience indicates that the extent of this problem has been greatly exaggerated. Records reveal that few of our children of school age have been dealt with for contact with narcotics. In the few cases in which this has happened, the boy or girl was one who had been involved in many other delinquent acts, and contact with narcotics was only one facet in the delinquency pattern. We have found no cases where a child who was not already delinquent has been introduced to the use of narcotics.

Larger cities in Texas have found juvenile traffic violation to be something of a problem. The machine age presents juvenile law-enforcement agencies with one type of offense for

which a satisfactory disposition remains to be found.

At present, a statute is available—though its worth is questioned by many—for Texas officers seeking answers to the juvenile traffic problem. This statute provides that juvenile traffic offenders found guilty of driving intoxicated, recklessly, or above the maximum speed limit are subject to penalties similar to those that may be imposed on adults for the same offenses. The suspended sentence under this statute, used most widely in rural counties, has been found effective.

We still have a long way to go. But our experience so far has convinced us that the police must function as a working cog in the community effort to control delinquency. Care must be exercised to select proper personnel, and great attention must be given to community conditions that might lead to delinquency.

With a young police department, such as ours, much can be accomplished toward effective crime prevention.

ago we had as few as 30 employees to control 300 or more boys. As recently as the early 1940's college graduates on the staff were earning as little as \$50 a month, with other personnel many times receiving less, for long hours of work. Today we can talk of "treatment" and "training," but we must remember that our advances have been made by a slow and tortuous process. It has been through the errors and sacrifices of our forerunners that we have reached our present "state of grace."

In some respects the reputation handed down to us from the past continues to hinder our work today. Each month we receive children whose older brothers, cousins, or fathers even were once institutionalized here. The stories that they have heard from these relatives have definitely made these children afraid of the institution. Sometimes it takes months for us to succeed in overcoming their fears. Meanwhile, they have related the Village's past history to others.

Background of deprivation

A great deal of water has passed over the dam of our boys' lives before they come to us. Chances are they either were born out of wedlock or cannot remember a real father residing in their homes. Their mothers frequently were at the doll-playing age when they became pregnant. At present we have one 14-year-old youth whose mother is but 25 years old. Another of our youths is the result of a young girl's being raped at the age of 14. At 15 she died from tuberculosis, and this boy was hospitalized 5 years for the same disease before he came to us as physically cured.

Our "average youth" is about 15 years old, with a mother in her early 30's. The child was reared usually by a grandmother or by some other elderly relative who neither understood nor wanted him. Often he has lived in a series of foster homes, placed there because of family neglect. In a majority of instances his family has lived in a well-known slum area, in a marginal dwelling, and has received public relief grants.

TRAINING SCHOOL

LAWSON J. VENEY

Superintendent of Boys' Village of Maryland, Cheltenham, Md.

BOYS' VILLAGE of Maryland, an 80-year-old institution, is in many respects a typical training school. We have had our due proportion of failure and success. Some of the youths who were once here have since become involved in additional delinquencies—and have made headlines. But it is difficult to find stories about our successes. Although many juvenile courts and other agencies furnishing aftercare service for us do report that we have been successful in our planning for disturbed children, this information does not make "good copy" and receives little of the attention given our failures.

The Village was not founded yesterday; it has to live with its past. Local newspaper morgues are full of stories about its past brutality toward children. The fact that brutality was practiced cannot be denied. Many training schools have dungeon relics. Our old records show that, as punishment for running away or fighting, young boys were confined in these dungeons for as long as 30 days, with a restricted diet and after being lashed. But these methods of control have not been used at Boys' Village for many years.

Our progress on other fronts has been somewhat slower. Not too long

Record after record shows that his schooling did not start until after his seventh year. Even then he was out of school as often as he attended, at first because of lack of shoes, or too great distance from home, or some such reason; later because remaining away from class became the easiest way to meet his failure to achieve.

The pattern after that is often the same. Roaming the streets is no fun without money to spend, and begging for pennies not too successful after a child passes the "little" stage. As one boy told me: "As long as I was small and cute, people gave me money. After that stopped I began shoplifting."

Delinquents are early truants

On a recent visit to the Village by a group of public-school administrators from a city that sends us 65 percent of our students, these school officials expressed their amazement at the number of boys they could call by name. They told stories of how aggressive some of these children were toward their teachers—even to the extent of fighting them. Many boys were pointed out as gang leaders, who forced smaller and weaker children to give them money. Others were said to have maliciously destroyed school property.

These public-school administrators all agreed on one point in particular, namely, that the children here whom they knew had all been persistent truants from school. During the past few years, as I have talked with institutional officials in the United States and from foreign countries, this basic fact has been repeated many times: The children sent to training schools have been well-known truants who disliked and refused to attend school classes. One principal said: "Those of your children known to me were spotted years ago by teachers who could easily have predicted their commitment here."

The typical Boys' Village youth has an I. Q. in the 80's. After a series of school failures, usually because of poor attendance, he may have reached the sixth grade at the time of his

commitment. The results of the educational and psychological tests given by the Village personnel show that he is 4 to 5 years behind in his school work. Very frequently he is a non-reader and is unable to do classroom work in a level higher than the fourth grade.

After they are released, 50 percent of our youths 16 years or older never return to school. Why should they? As they ask, "Who wants to sit in classes with junior high kids and not understand what they are doing?" If they were placed at the level where they should be, they would be "twice as large" as the other children in the class.

Some people call these children "misfits." Actually, they are children for whom society has failed to plan adequately. Thrust out into a competitive society that expects a dollar's work for a dollar's pay, they again find it difficult to achieve their balance. Even when there are jobs available for teen-agers, the competition from children who are products of intact homes is too great.

Recently I interviewed one of our boys, a 16-year-old who had run through four jobs in 6 months' time. His story was typical of many I have heard:

"There is no one home to get me up My mother never gives me any breakfast I didn't have lunch money for 8 days. When I walked home there was nothing to eat, and the boss fired me for taking too much time off for lunch."

This youngster had tried to walk to and from home for lunch—a total distance of 6 miles—in one hour's time!

One 16-year-old boy who was with us for 3 years returned to visit us last week in a stolen car. We learned that he could not find a job and his mother was tired of feeding him. She had told him to move in around the corner with a 17-year-old girl friend who worked.

Another recently released 16-year-old who had made a very successful adjustment here, begged the courts to let him return. In making room

for him at home, his mother had forced her boy friend to move out. However, she only accepted the boy as a "duty," and constantly irritated him by relating how much money her friend had given her. It is little wonder that the boy became involved in further trouble within 3 months of his release from training school.

Careful planning needed

Training-school employees have a tremendous responsibility. They receive for treatment children who are usually unwanted and often unloved. Within a short span of time—the average length of stay at Boys' Village is 11 months—and assuming that there has been proper diagnosis and a good treatment plan, the training-school personnel must gain acceptance of children who have learned to distrust adults.

Institutions can be havens of refuge for those children who need planned group-living experience. The smaller and less complicated the school, the easier it is for every employee to know the total child. And the better the State classification procedure, the less often will feeble-minded children be found housed with aggressive delinquents, and sex deviants with healthy youngsters who are just beginning to ask questions about life.

There are answers to the many problems involved in planning for institutionalized children, though they may not be easy to find. Citizens must be alerted and officials and legislators intelligently "sold" on the need for services. One man or woman in each State can do this. But he will need the humility and tenacity of purpose of a Ghandi, the firmness of St. Peter, the wisdom of Solomon. In a sense, citizens who seek to give children the chance for a fuller and happier life must be dedicated in their mission. They must believe in the democratic way of life. And they must recognize our children as America's richest heritage.

FOCUS ON DELINQUENCY

BERTRAM M. BECK

JUST A FEW months ago representatives of about two dozen major national voluntary organizations concerned with the welfare of children sat down to discuss the recent rise in delinquency. The group was struck by the fact that although practically all of them saw their activity as at least in part contributing to the prevention of delinquency, only a few had any specific program for delinquent children. This was perhaps no more than to be expected.

In the past we have quite properly held the view that prevention of delinquency, rather than treatment, is our major goal. We have been reluctant to talk of a program that offers treatment to the juvenile delinquent, holding that such a concept has little meaning and that what we do in the interest of children should be accomplished for all children, not for just one category.

The recent steady rise in delinquency, however, gives cause for a careful examination of some of our ideas about delinquency. We have come to the point where we must face certain questions squarely: Do delinquent children have characteristics that are different from those of other children served by our public and private child-welfare program? If so, what are they? And if there are such differences, what implications do they have for our programs in the prevention and treatment of juvenile delinquency?

In answer to these questions, there is reason to believe that finally, though perhaps reluctantly, we are commencing to accept the fact that delinquent children *can be distinguished* from other children and that their distinguishing characteristics *have definite implications* for treatment.

Two ways in which these children are distinguished will be discussed

here. In one case the characteristic arises purely from their situation. The simple fact that a child comes before the court as a delinquent and is involved in a legal process sets him off from other children. The authoritative setting cannot fail to have considerable significance in the way in which delinquent children respond to treatment. This fact has long been understood, but we have failed to accord it sufficient recognition, particularly in the training of personnel.

The second distinguishing characteristic is more limited but is of no less importance. It is the temperament of a certain kind of delinquent child within the larger group of delinquents, both adjudicated and non-adjudicated. This child is one of the "chronic delinquents," who make up the "hard core" of the delinquency problem. New research has shed a brighter light on this group of children.

Let us look at the more general characteristic first.

I

Authority pervades the life of the delinquent child so long as he remains within the pale of legal supervision. And although the juvenile court acts in the interest of all children who come before it, there is a marked difference between the reason why a delinquent child is brought to court and the reason why a neglected or dependent child appears before the court.

The neglected or dependent child is brought before the court because of events outside his control, the delinquent child because of his own delinquent act or acts. The delinquent

child may, and often does, view his court experience as punishment for misbehavior. The public more or less sees the delinquent child as a threat to public safety, and as an offender rather than as a child offended against.

In other words, once a child becomes the official concern of the juvenile court because of an act of delinquency, his court experience has an effect both on him and on the public's attitude toward him.

Here, then, is one considerable difference between children coming to the attention of the court because of delinquency and children of comparable age who are the concern of the court or of public and private child-welfare services for other reasons. This difference must be taken into account in the treatment program for all delinquents who come before the juvenile court.

"Treatment" may seem like punishment

Whatever the juvenile court does to alter the course of life of a delinquent child is likely to be seen by that child as punishment for his misconduct. This fancied or real punishment may aggravate the hostility of a child and perhaps induce other rebellious acts. Thus, the treatment may aggravate the disease.

The delinquent's distrust and rebellion against authority commence at an early age. The case records of delinquent children tell us that the large majority were truants from school.

It is interesting in this regard to look at an account of the appearance of two ex-delinquents before a meeting of the National Conference of Juvenile Agencies.

In response to the question from the floor, "What was the first institution that you ever went to?" one of the boys named the public school he had attended!

These two boys found absolutely nothing good to say of the various

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institutions they had been in. So far as they were concerned, they were *made* to do things and when they failed to do them, they were *punished*. They said they could understand being "knocked off" for doing something wrong but it seemed to them that they were always being "knocked off"—and without any apparent reason. In other words, to those two boys, treatment was punishment.

In summing up their opinion about institutions, the boys had this to say: "There ain't no such thing as a good joint—and there never will be. A good joint is no joint."

Implications for treatment

The statements of these two boys highlight the very difficult problems of those workers who are engaged in programs for the "officially" delinquent child.

The police officer who apprehends such children, the juvenile-court judge, the probation officer, the staff of the detention home, and the staff of the training school—all need special skill and knowledge to deal with these children. All must have an acute awareness of the need to protect public safety and the civil rights of parents and children. All must exercise authority vested in them by law. All must function in such a way, however, that the child is not embittered and the delinquency is not aggravated.

The police have a major role in delinquency control. They bring a ma-

jority of delinquents to the court. At least one million children come to their attention each year because of some alleged act of delinquency. Many of these children are not taken to court. The police officer must decide in each instance what action he will take.

Recent years have witnessed a rapid expansion of special branches of police forces for work with juveniles. Many police forces have developed services for children that seem more appropriately the job of the social agency. According to police authorities, however, such services have been developed simply because of the reluctance of existing social agencies to adapt their programs to meet the need of the delinquent child.

Those social agencies that work with delinquent children must develop sympathetic and cooperative relations with the police. They must learn to appreciate the difficult role of the police, who have the dual task of protecting public safety and, at the same time, serving the broader interests of the child and the community. They must aid the police by accepting such responsibility for the treatment of delinquency as is rightfully that of the social agency, and by supporting necessary measures to promote special training for juvenile police officers.

The part that the **juvenile court** plays in a program for helping delinquent children is crucial. The juvenile-court judge must have legal

skill and also the ability to use the knowledge both of the social workers who serve him as probation officers and of other such specialists.

In some instances the judge's opinion as to what might be best for the delinquent child has to be tempered by other considerations. For example, a boy who sets fires may have to be committed to an institution even though he might better be given psychological treatment while remaining in his own home. In other words, when a delinquent constitutes a real and immediate danger to other persons, the necessity to protect public safety will undoubtedly influence treatment plans for this child.

As another example, community sentiment in regard to certain sex offenses may necessitate removal of a child from the community in contradiction to his best interest. The juvenile-court judge must know how to strike a balance between the interest of the delinquent child and the protection of the public safety. Such considerations usually do not enter into his work with dependent and neglected children.

Another primary consideration that must invariably determine the opinion of the judge is respect for the civil rights of children and their parents. These rights must be protected. The fact that a child has committed certain acts must be well established before a court can take action in the interest of the child. No attempt should be made to "stretch the law" so that a child who cannot properly be considered delinquent under the laws of a State is adjudicated delinquent merely to make it possible for him to receive services. The maintenance of the proper legal process in protection of the rights of man takes precedence over procuring services for an individual child.

The role of the **probation officer** is particularly difficult. Not only must he be guided by the same consideration that affects the court but also he must undertake treatment that will best help the child. The child on probation may, if he fails to make adjustment, be returned to

Friendly, skilled counsel gains trust and often brings a desire to be better. Improved training for personnel who work with children is probably the delinquency field's greatest need.



that court and possibly sent to an institution—a possibility that represents the extreme in punishment to most delinquent children. The probation worker becomes for the child the symbol of the authority against which he rebels.

The probation worker must therefore attempt to convert what appears to be a handicap into an asset. He must not surrender his authority, but he must exercise it on behalf of the child and the general public. With skillful handling by the probation officer, it is hoped that the child comes finally to accept his guidance and counsel. And as the child learns to accept reasonable authority, he learns also to accept the authority exercised in the outside adult world.

Although probation services are offered by the child-welfare worker in many jurisdictions, the authority role remains the same. The worker needs special skill and knowledge over and above what is required for serving children in nonauthoritative settings.

Discussion of the role played by the staff of the training school might best perhaps be included in our discussion of the second major distinguishing characteristic of delinquent children. For usually it becomes the responsibility of the training school to treat the "hard core" group of delinquents, about whom we are now going to talk.

II

Within the group of adjudicated delinquents dealt with in the juvenile court, there is a smaller group of chronic delinquents. These children are different from other groups of delinquents, and treatment must be planned for them in the light of their special characteristics.

Their differences have recently been brought out more clearly as the result of a study by Sheldon and Eleanor Glueck. In this study 500 delinquents in a training school were compared with 500 nondelinquents of similar background and characteristics. All the children were boys, and all lived in underprivileged neighborhoods. In each pair, the delinquent and the nondelinquent were of simi-



Will these children become delinquent? Well-planned community services can prevent this.

lar age, intelligence, and national origin.

The most important distinguishing characteristic between the groups of children was that the delinquent children did not have the ability to control their rebellious, aggressive, hostile feelings, and gave vent to such feelings in antisocial acts.

The nondelinquent children, on the other hand, either had some kind of safety valve, so that they could deal with their hostile impulses without conflict with the law, or they held their hostility inside them, where it contributed to a feeling of discomfort but was not of immediate concern to those around them. Anyone who has restrained an impulse to "tell somebody off" and then has developed a "nervous headache" or upset stomach can understand the plight of such nondelinquent children.

The nondelinquents, to a far greater extent than the institutionalized delinquents, had internalized emotional disturbances. The delinquents were free-wheelers—adventurous, restless, impulsive, and destructive, but relatively free from worries and anxieties until the community interfered with their behavior pattern. The nondelinquent group contained by far the larger proportion of the "worried" children.

What makes them delinquent?

All the children the Gluecks studied were children of the slums. Sociologists, led by Clifford Shaw, have pointed out how most adjudged delinquents come from the disadvantaged areas of a city. Allison Davis, a prominent educator, has deepened our understanding of why so many delinquents come from slums. He showed us how difficult it is for all the people in a community to have a single idea of right and wrong when people of one race or people from one economic level are segregated in a particular section of a city. The youngster brought up on the "wrong side of the tracks," where the fight for survival is bitter, may in turn enter into battle with society in general. The child on the "right side of the tracks" usually adopts the conventional or conforming behavior of his elders.

All the children studied by the Gluecks were early in danger of becoming delinquent because of conditions in the neighborhood in which they lived. The delinquents, however, had an additional handicap not suffered by the nondelinquent. To a far greater extent than the nondelinquents, the chronic delinquents were reared in homes offering little affection, guidance, stability, or protection. Their parents, weighed down by

personal misery and poverty, were not able to offer that extra something that can keep a child even in the worst of slums from becoming delinquent.

Although most of the delinquent children studied did not come into court until early adolescence, about one-third were noticeably delinquent as early as 8 years of age.

Implications for prevention

Knowledge about this hard-core group of delinquent children now makes it possible for a community to attack the delinquency problem in a precise fashion—both from the preventive and treatment aspects.

Preventive activities can and should be part of a broad program designed to prevent all kinds of social maladjustment. Certain activities, however, can be aimed at a specific objective, namely, those children who are prone to delinquency but are not officially delinquent. This group includes the youngster who is just beginning to develop a pattern of delinquent behavior. Also included are the chronic delinquents who have been known to law-enforcement agencies in the past, and those chronic delinquents who through wit or luck have escaped official notice.

Our knowledge of the characteristics of the chronic delinquent, for example, demonstrates that even at an early age he probably cannot be reached by the conventional supervised recreation program. He is more often a child of the street. He resents the authority represented by supervision and he craves excitement and adventure. To reach these children, therefore, a recreation program must reach out to the delinquent child and his gang, and must operate in the child's own territory—the street. Such programs have been launched in several cities.

Furthermore, we know that if we wish to curtail the development of a delinquent pattern in a child opposed to school, we must utilize the best in modern educational techniques to hold the attention of that child.

The fact that the children in our training schools usually have an al-

legiance to gang activity makes it important that a preventive program in the community offer services to the gang as a unit.

In other words, if a community wants to reach the truly delinquent child, its program must reflect the definite knowledge that we have of the characteristics of this kind of child and not merely provide activity good for children in general.

In addition to programs aimed at children already involved in delinquency patterns, preventive programs must also be aimed at strengthening family living, so that problem behavior will not develop among the very young children. New light on the subject of delinquency makes it clear that if such broad programs of prevention are to be successful in curtailing delinquency, they must be aimed at the preschool child. Citizens, regardless of their walk in life, must band together to eliminate the areas that are the primary breeding places of delinquency. Basic social and economic measures are usually necessary. Parent education and guidance and counseling for children and parents should be provided in the community to aid parents in the rearing of healthy children. All that we now know about the prevention of behavior disorders underlines the need to aid parents with problems of child rearing during the earliest years of the child's life.

Implications for treatment

Knowledge of the special characteristics of the child whose delinquency pattern is well developed provides clues for the successful treatment of such children.

Social and psychological understanding is needed in order to comprehend the relationship of family and community in promoting delinquency. The treatment offered the chronic delinquent, however, probably must be something different from that offered the emotionally disturbed child.

Because of rejection by adults and substitution of the gang for the family, it may be that the chronic delinquent could be treated, at least in-

itally, in groups. Singly or in groups, the establishment of the relationship between the person doing the treating and the child being treated is of primary importance.

The major problem would seem to be that of helping the child develop necessary inner controls of behavior, rather than aiding him in the resolution of internal conflicts.

Herein lies the task of the staff of the training school in most instances.

Delinquent children have special needs

In summary we can therefore say that the delinquent child has, on the one hand, the same needs as all children and, on the other, special needs.

Just like other children who require attention from public or private social agencies, the delinquent child may need casework treatment, psychiatric treatment, or foster care—singly or in combination. Since such services are offered for all children who need them, they may be and often should be under the administrative auspices of a single agency. Services for certain groups of children, however, must be geared to the particular needs of those groups.

Infatuation with the concept that children are children, and that the word "delinquent" is a label without any particular significance, has impeded the development of necessary services for delinquent children. A great deal of attention has been given to activities for prevention. Such activities often march under the popular banner of delinquency prevention, but are, in reality, activities designed to make possible a healthy development of all children. It is very likely that these activities do prevent delinquency, as well as a host of other social disorders. Such prevention programs, however, will not cope with the chronic delinquent in the community, who needs preventive services specially adapted to his particular characteristics.

At the present time, services for delinquent children who come to the attention of our law-enforcement agencies are seriously limited.

(Continued on page 71)

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A FEW FACTS ABOUT JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

OUR FACTS on juvenile delinquency are taken mainly from two sources: police fingerprint records, sent in to the FBI, and juvenile-court delinquency cases, reported to the Children's Bureau.

All these reports are sent in on a voluntary basis, and they give only uneven coverage. As a result, the data may not be representative of the national picture.

Limited as they are, however, these facts, combined with data from other sources, furnish the best available means for estimate.

It will be one of the aims of the Special Juvenile Delinquency Project to help secure more reliable data on juvenile delinquents, and thereby improve our methods of helping them.

HOW MANY DELINQUENTS?

In 1951, an estimated 350,000 children were brought to the attention of the juvenile courts in this country for delinquent behavior. The boys outnumbered the girls 4 to 1.

A much greater number, *perhaps a million or so*, came in contact with the police on account of misbehavior. This group included many who were referred to the court.

Many delinquent children escape the attention of the law. We do not know definitely the number of these "concealed" delinquents, but studies indicate that it may be considerable. A survey made in a large Eastern city of the case records of children coming to social-work agencies for help and guidance revealed that of the large number of children who spoke openly of the serious acts of delinquency they had committed, *almost one-third of the children were un-*

known to the police. It is impossible to estimate how many delinquent children escaped the attention of all agencies in the community.

IS THEIR NUMBER INCREASING?

The answer is *yes* if preliminary data for 1951 from juvenile courts reporting to the Children's Bureau is a reliable indication of what is happening. For these courts the number of child delinquents *increased 19 percent* between 1948 and 1951. Figures on police fingerprint records show a similar trend. The number of children in the country in the principal age group affected (10-17) increased only 5 percent during that year.

Unless we do something now to prevent it, there may be further increases in the number of delinquent children. The total number of children in the age group 10-17 is expected to increase 45 percent between 1950 and 1960.

The babies born during and after World War II are growing up. Will the number of delinquent children also increase 45 percent? Will it increase at an even greater rate, as it is now doing? Or will we succeed in preventing an increase?

WHAT HAVE THEY DONE?

Juvenile-court reports show that the majority of the boys are brought in for *stealing* or *committing malicious mischief*.

Most of the girl delinquents are brought in for *being ungovernable*, for *running away*, or for having committed a *sexual offense*.

Police fingerprint records reveal that in 1951 children under 18 com-

mitted *24 percent* of the Nation's *auto thefts*.

They also commit crimes of violence: *3 percent of homicide cases* and *7 percent of rape* in 1951.

More *serious crimes* were committed by boys and girls 18 years old during the first 6 months of 1952 than by persons of any other age group.

HOW OLD ARE THEY?

The majority of delinquent children who come before juvenile courts are *between 15 and 17* years of age.

Approximately *35 percent* of the delinquent children who come before the courts have been there on *one or more previous occasions*.

The age at which the largest number of delinquents are *first* apprehended by the police or referred to the court seems to be *between 13 and 15*, or approximately at puberty. This was shown by a study of a thousand delinquent children.

Nine-tenths of these same children were having considerable difficulty adjusting to normal life *before they were 11 years old*. *More than a third* of this total group of one thousand children were showing noticeable signs of *becoming delinquent* at the *age of 8 or younger*.

WHAT HAPPENS TO THEM?

Of the one million children who came to the attention of the police for misbehavior last year, about 750,000 were *dealt with directly by the police*, who let them go with a warning or perhaps referred them to a social agency for guidance and help.

The remaining 250,000 committed acts of delinquency so serious that the police *referred them to the juvenile court.*

An additional 100,000 were brought to juvenile courts by *parents, teachers, social agencies,* and the like.

At least 115,000 of the 350,000 children who were brought to the juvenile court were held overnight or longer in a *detention facility, police station house or jail.*

It has been estimated that from 50,000 to 100,000 children are *confined in jails each year* by the authority of the courts or other law-enforcement agencies.

Of the 350,000 delinquent children who came before the juvenile courts in 1951, the cases of about half were *dismissed, adjusted, or held open* without further action.

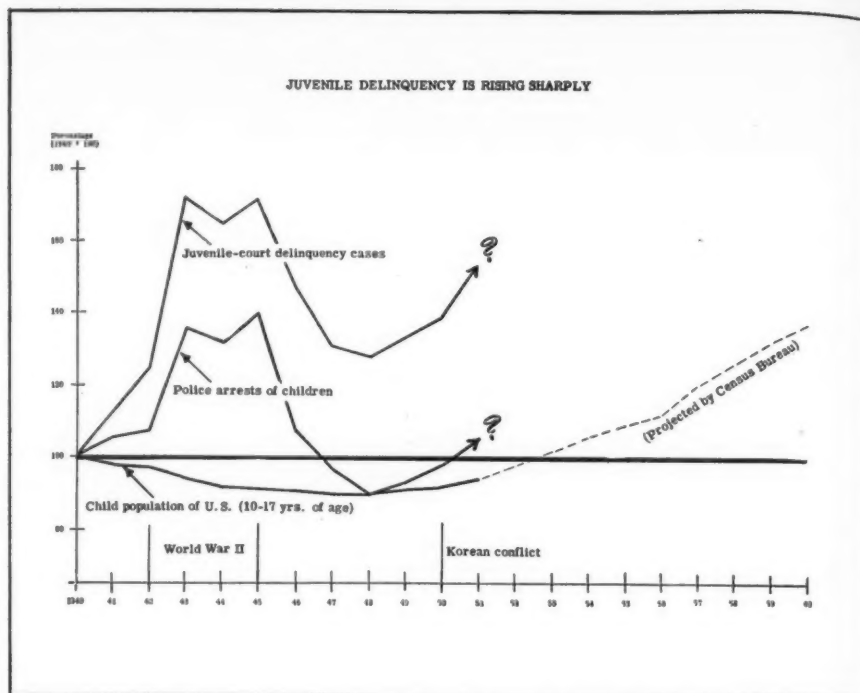
Of the remaining children, approximately 95,000 *were placed on probation* and the rest were either referred to other agencies, committed to institutions, or handled in other ways.

About 35,000 children a year are committed by juvenile courts to training institutions designed primarily for delinquents.

WHAT SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE?

At the present time we have no adequate information as to the number of police officers with special training for work with juveniles. (This information is currently being collected by the Children's Bureau and the International Association of Chiefs of Police.) The number needed has been estimated at 10,000, or at least 5 percent of our total number of police officers. A city with a population of 20,000 should have *at least one policeman* trained for work with delinquents.

A recent study of 177 cities, each with a population of more than 20,000, revealed that more than *one-third* of them have not yet made



special provision in their police departments for work with children.

The Delinquency Control Institute of the University of Southern California, which offers the only university-operated training program for juvenile officers in the country, has *graduated 173* persons since it was founded in 1946. A few other schools—the Police Training Institute of the University of Louisville, the FBI Academy, and local academies and police schools—do give some attention to police work with juveniles, but, so far as we know, this instruction represents only a small portion of the total curriculum.

There are more than *2,500 juvenile courts* distributed over the Nation. If the children brought before them are to receive even minimum help, a court needs sufficient probation service for study of each child's background and for guiding those children that the court places on probation.

The court should also have available to it a detention facility suitable for keeping children in secure custody. One detention facility may occasionally serve more than one court.

The number of such detention homes in the United States *is only 174.*

At least one-half the counties in the United States are *without probation services* for juvenile delinquents.

There are at present 3,716 local probation officers for juveniles. Many of these officers serve both children and adults.

In 1951 these officers had the major responsibility of serving not only 350,000 delinquent children, but also 150,000 dependent, neglected, and other children who are the concern of juvenile courts. In other words, there is *1 probation officer for every 135 children* coming to the court. Of course, this is only an average. Some courts have highly developed probation services, but many have none whatever.

About 30,000 delinquent children are in the more than 250 training institutions designed primarily for such children.

The average length of stay of a delinquent child in a training institution is somewhat *less than one year.*

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RECOMMENDED FOR EVERY COMMUNITY

ON THIS PAGE are set forth certain desirable practices, or standards of practice, that have been recommended to communities seeking to improve their services for delinquent children.

The services considered here are those offered by the police, the juvenile court, the detention facility, and the training school—four agencies entrusted with a legal and social responsibility for helping our delinquent children become better-adjusted individuals and better citizens. In addition, standards for the organization and administration of these services are included.

The statements given here, which are part of a more complete list now being compiled by the Children's Bureau, were drawn from the publications and proceedings of a large number of national groups and organizations that are interested in preventing juvenile delinquency and in giving proper treatment to those children who have become delinquent.

These organizations, and others like them, are continuing to add to those standards and to bring them up to date. During the coming year, the Children's Bureau will lend encouragement to these efforts, and hopes eventually to have standards formulated for every aspect of our community's services for delinquents.

In the meantime, the list of existing standards should be useful not only in guiding the development of services in the areas covered but also to mark the areas not covered.

The selection of standards on this page covers just a few aspects of each service. The goals set forth are not new. They are familiar to many people. But there is not a town in the Nation that would not benefit its children immeasurably by making these simple statements come true.

State organization and administration

In every State government a single department should have authority and responsibility for coordinating services for delinquent children, developing standards for such services, establishing new services, relating these services to those of other agencies in the State, using the services of other agencies in the State, and stimulating leadership in local communities.

This State agency should have responsibility for aiding political subdivisions of the State in providing probation service and detention care.

This State agency should make consultation service available to the various agencies providing care and treatment to delinquent children, and should have responsibility for promoting the development and use of social services in juvenile-court cases.

This State agency should have a

clear responsibility for giving leadership and assistance in developing in-service training programs in all State and local agencies that operate programs for delinquent children.

Programs of service to children, including delinquent children, should be coordinated at the State and local levels by some form of planning and coordinating body.

Police

Instruction and training in the handling of juveniles should be a part of the basic training of every police officer.

Police officers with a major responsibility for work with children should have special training that will enable them to make constructive use of the broad discretion they have in handling each instance of juvenile delinquency that comes to their attention.

Law-enforcement agencies should participate along with other community agencies as full partners in the process of coordinating and planning services for children.

Police departments in urban centers should have a special unit devoted to protective and preventive work with juveniles.

Officers assigned specific responsibility with respect to juveniles should be assigned on a basis of personal fitness and capacity to work with children and youth.

Juvenile court

The juvenile-court judge should have legal training and should be a member of the bar. He should have sufficient knowledge of the sciences of human behavior to be able to use and to be willing to use expert advice on the problems of human relations.

Provision must be made for social study of the child prior to final court action and for the services of trained and skilled counselors to aid children placed on probation.

A probation officer should have, as a minimum requirement for appoint-

ment to his position, a bachelor's degree from a college or university of recognized standing, with specialization in the social sciences.

Probation officers should be appointed only on merit, without regard to political affiliation.

Child-guidance clinics, mental-health clinics, and psychological, pediatric, and other needed services for children should be made available to the juvenile court.

Detention

A delinquent child who must be kept in secure custody should be held in a detention facility designed and conducted for such children, and not in a jail or police lockup.

It should be possible to admit a child to detention at any hour of the day or night. All detention should be authorized by the court.

Detention must in every case be as brief as possible.

Every detention facility should have a plant, program, and staff that will enable it to make detention the first step in a constructive treatment process.

Training school

The training school should be sent only those children who are in need of and who can profit by its services.

In the training-school treatment process, an attempt should be made soon after a child's arrival to gauge his emotional and social maladjustments and their underlying reasons. A program of individual and group therapy should then be prescribed to correct them.

The director and staff should be selected on the basis of merit alone.

Psychiatric and psychological services should be available.

Children in training schools should have educational opportunities that are at least equivalent to those offered in the community.

An aftercare program should be maintained for the guidance of children released from the school.

COMMUNITIES ACT AGAINST DELINQUENCY

DOUGLAS H. MACNEIL

COMMUNITIES find out about their delinquency problem in a number of ways, and they go about taking action toward solving the problem in just as many different fashions.

Hundreds of cities and counties already have much information available about their delinquency problem. In these communities, local committees on children and youth collected facts for use in the 1950 Midcentury White House Conference. A number of these committees are continuing their efforts to bring these recommendations to fruition. In some cities, an official body—the welfare council for instance—may keep close tab on the situation and alert the community to any pressing need.

Elsewhere, the discovery that there is a delinquency problem may come as a surprise, and generally that surprise is apt to be unpleasant. I know of a number of cases like this and will mention a few of them here.

On Hallowe'en of 1950 such extreme acts of vandalism took place in Oneida County, Wis., that the need to do something about juvenile delinquency was plain. The local chapter of the Veterans of Foreign Wars soon went to work and helped organize a citizens' committee to find out why so many young people were getting into trouble. The State of Wisconsin helped Oneida County make a survey to see what was needed, and the community has gone far toward filling those needs.

DOUGLAS H. MACNEIL is the Director of the Division of Community Services of the New Jersey State Department of Institutions and Agencies. This Division is concerned with helping communities improve and coordinate services for children and youth. Through the courtesy of the State of New Jersey, Mr. MacNeil is temporarily serving as a special consultant with the Juvenile Delinquency Project sponsored by the Children's Bureau.

In Austin, Tex., a grand jury called the attention of the people to the problem of delinquency in that community. During February 1948, in the course of investigating the administration of justice in the county, the grand jury handed down a strict indictment of the way delinquent children were being dealt with. The jury proposed far-reaching reforms. The community council was asked to take on the job of getting interested individuals and groups organized in an effort to bring these reforms into being. Today the city of Austin, and Travis County, together have a new detention home, and the probation services of the juvenile court have been strengthened by the addition of new probation officers to work with delinquent children.

In Seattle, Wash., the brutal murder of a 16-year-old boy by other

juvenile inmates in the county jail finally made the citizens of that community aware of how greatly they had failed in their responsibility. For 5 years the juvenile-court judge and other officials had been warning the public about the terrible conditions under which juvenile delinquents were being held. But no group had responded to the judge's pleas, and he could not remedy the situation alone. It took a cruel and inhuman murder to awaken the public to the urgency of the need for better juvenile-court facilities. Today Seattle has a magnificent new Youth Service Center dedicated to the task of rehabilitating its delinquent youth.

Another case that comes to mind has to do with the establishment of the Child Guidance Clinic of the Oranges and Maplewood in New Jersey. For several years, the Mental Hygiene Committee of the Social Planning Council had urged the creation of such a clinic but without much response from the public. Then three boys from families with standing in the community stole weapons from a

These children in a crowded neighborhood find their recreation in the street. Recreation workers trying to prevent delinquency need to seek out children wherever they congregate.



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collection of guns owned by the father of one and shot a passer-by in the course of what amounted to an act of armed robbery.

A newspaper editorial asked how such an episode could have been anticipated. The Council pointed out that, properly used, the proposed clinic might have helped. Thereupon the newspaper announced a substantial gift from its own corporate funds and then spearheaded an intensive drive for the clinic. This assured its establishment. Now several years old, the clinic is one of the basic community services for atypical children.

One man can do a great deal

In each of these communities, the need to do something about the delinquency problem had to be forced upon the attention of the public. And once the need was discovered, a group of people stimulated the community to action. But sometimes one key person, if he is determined enough, can open the eyes of a community to bad conditions affecting children. This person may be someone officially concerned—a juvenile-court judge, for example, or the chief of police. Or he may be just an ordinary citizen.

A newspaperman started the ball rolling in Monroe, Mich., back in the thirties. He first began to think about juvenile delinquency when he noticed how many of the news stories that crossed his desk involved children and young people. Soon he began to wonder what it was in the community life that was causing these kids to become delinquent, and what the officials in the town were doing to help these children and to prevent further delinquency. So, in his own words: "I wrote to half a dozen people in town I knew would be concerned, enclosed the clippings, and suggested we meet Monday."

Thus commenced a campaign that was to lead eventually to many improvements in Monroe's services for children, delinquent and nondelinquent. The juvenile court has been bettered; two policewomen have been hired to work with juveniles; recreational facilities have been expanded and improved. But these gains were

not easily won. They took 10 years of hard and sometimes frustrating work.

In Middletown, N. Y., a boxing promoter, disturbed by the social attitudes of some of the boys who came to watch his fighters train, set in motion a community program to meet the recreational needs of children who do not fit into conventional group-work or recreation programs. After much determined effort, he succeeded in obtaining support for his idea from virtually all civic and youth-service organizations in his community.

Fixing community responsibility

Of the many suggestions that could be drawn from these case histories of community action, I believe we should emphasize two in particular:

First, no matter who starts the campaign, a large and representative group of citizens must be brought in to participate. It isn't a job for one man to carry through alone. One man can do much to stimulate interest and to prod those who lag. But if a campaign is to be successful, it must have the backing of a lot of people. Which brings us to the second idea: People must be informed about every aspect of the campaign—*why* it is necessary, *what* it hopes to reach, and *how* the goals can be accomplished. The public is not apt to get very excited about raising salaries for probation officers, or sending a local policeman away for training to fit him for work with juveniles, or building a detention home, unless it knows why these things are necessary and what good they are expected to accomplish.

Individuals and groups undertaking such campaigns have found how essential it is to keep these two ideas in mind. In some cases they've learned by bitter experience how unpredictable the public can be—and also public officials.

Take the case of Lehigh County and its detention home, for example. Lehigh County is in Pennsylvania. Some professional people who work with delinquent children there undertook to bring to the community's at-

tention the need for a detention home. The story of the struggle that ensued before the home was finally secured is told in the September 1951 issue of the Quarterly of the Pennsylvania Association on Probation and Parole.

The campaign started back in 1932. School authorities conducted a survey of detention and made a report. No other groups were called in, however—and nothing happened. In 1937, in 1939, and again in 1943 the problem of detention came up—but nothing was done.

Finally, in 1946, the council of social agencies was asked by the probation office and the Family Service Agency to undertake a study of the problem. Professional workers for children were already convinced that a detention home was needed. But this time the public was going to find out that a detention home was needed. Citizen participation was sought.

A subcommittee heavily weighted with interested citizens was formed to study facilities for the care of delinquent children. The first thing they discovered was that Lehigh County *was keeping juvenile delinquents in jail. This was against the State law.* The law clearly and specifically stated that no city or county could detain adolescents in any jail where adults were confined. Clearly the law was being violated. No one seemed very concerned.

But the subcommittee was disturbed. It went to work figuring out plans for a detention facility. And fortunately at this point it called in the chief probation officer of the local juvenile court to give guidance and advice. Later on, the National Probation and Parole Association was asked to advise on specific details of the construction of the home. Technical advice of this sort is nearly always necessary.

After about a year's work, the subcommittee came out with an excellent report on the need for detention facilities, and the executive committee of the council approved it overwhelmingly.

A lot of publicity was given the report, but a way had still to be found

to keep the issue alive and to press for action. A citizens' committee was formed. Composed of some 20 individuals representing industry, labor, clubs, professions, and other interests in the community, the committee was led by a man described as having the tenacity of a bulldog. He opened the meeting with words to this effect: "If any one of you thinks I am going to be chairman of a committee that is going to do nothing, and forget this report, each and every one of you has another guess coming."

The citizens' committee went about its task in the most direct way possible: political action. By now, it was election time—September 1948. All the candidates for county office promised to take up the matter of the detention home the moment they got into office. This was very satisfying. But, once in office, the elected commissioners allowed the budget to get through *without mention of a detention home*.

This was a blow, but the committee took it standing. They had been strengthened in their determination by a little demonstration staged by the chief probation officer that, although not generally to be recommended, left a lasting impression. Three or four youngsters under 13 who had been picked up and placed

in the county jail for some delinquent act were brought to a meeting of the committee. No one knew their names or what they had done. The committee saw simply a small group of ordinary youngsters. These children were not criminals, to be kept in a jail.

The campaign for a detention home went on. A mass meeting was held. The grand jury recommended that the home should be built. And finally a lawyer on the committee "... began to talk of the possibility of mandamus proceedings against the county commissioners ... to compel these public officials to do their duty."

With that the battle was won. The county commissioners shortly thereafter voted funds and authorized the drawing up of plans for a detention home. Today Lehigh County has a detention home that it feels is "second to none in the Commonwealth."

Steps in a community action program

Perhaps these case histories have served to point to the steps a community may have to take in an action program. Of course the situation will vary considerably from community to community, but in general there are several definite stages in any campaign.

1. *Someone has to start the campaign*—either an individual or a group.

2. *Other interested individuals and groups must immediately be invited to participate.* Many communities have a Community Chest or Council that can serve to coordinate the efforts of individuals and groups. In some others the committees organized on behalf of the 1950 White House Conference may serve as the coordinating body. Still another unifying agent may be a coordinating council or youth-guidance council organized for the specific purpose of improving preventive and treatment services relating to delinquency.

Often it will be found that the problem about which a group is concerned is one that has also worried other groups in the community. If these groups join forces, the probabilities of a successful solution are enhanced. Or it may be found that someone else has thought of a different solution from the one a particular group has in mind. My advice in this case is, explore all the alternatives and try to reach an agreement as to what should be attempted. Nothing is more fatal to community progress than conflict over which solution or which organization should take precedence.

3. *The need must be well defined.* Sometimes the need is self-evident. If a juvenile court has no probation

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service, it is obvious that such a service should be provided.

In other cases, however, the situation may be more complex. For example, an interested group may believe that the community needs a detention home. Study reveals, however, that most of the children who come to the juvenile court would be better served in their own homes or in foster homes, with improved probation service. A detention home in this community would therefore be a needless expense.

In those cases where the need is not clear and precise, a survey is generally to be recommended. Existing services should be measured. Every effort should be made to find out what the need is and how it can best be filled.

In case a full-scale survey is called for, to determine what the community is doing—or *not* doing—for all children, special consideration can be given the problem of delinquent children.

4. To get accurate data on its needs, a community or neighborhood quite often requires the assistance of consultants.

In Cleveland, Ohio, a citizens' group in a high-delinquency area used a survey made by skilled workers from the Welfare Federation of that city. The Federation also assisted in a follow-up campaign in the neighborhood, a campaign that led, over a 10-year period, to a 70-percent reduction in delinquency in the area.

In the case of Oneida County, Wis., mentioned previously, the citizens' committee was helped by the Division for Children and Youth of the State Department of Public Welfare. A State worker went to the community and, with the help of local citizens, conducted a thorough survey of the services and resources available to young people.

In addition to Wisconsin, a number of other States offer consultation service, related to juvenile delinquency, to local communities. California, Minnesota, Rhode Island, Illinois, New York, Kansas, Texas, and Mississippi all offer assistance through the Department of Welfare

or a Youth Commission, or other public body.

In my own State of New Jersey, this service is given by the Department of Institutions and Agencies through its Division of Community Services, of which I am the Director.

Sometimes it is wise to consult the State agency in this field even though you may see no immediate need for help. In a number of instances, our Division has been able to bring two groups in the same community together, both of which perceived a need, but both unaware of the potential ally next door. A parallel service has been to bring groups from adjoining communities together so as to develop joint programs which neither community could operate successfully alone.

In New York State, in addition to the advisory service it offers, the Youth Commission has funds that can be granted for community youth service projects under certain conditions. No other State has a similar grant-in-aid program. But it has sometimes been possible for us in New Jersey to help local projects qualify for help through existing State or Federal grant-in-aid programs. A community group should not build hopes on such support, however.

In addition to these State agencies that offer consultation service, a number of voluntary organizations will go into a community, when invited, and help local citizens survey their needs and resources. In the delinquency field the National Probation and Parole Association is an outstanding organization of this type.

Perhaps it would be helpful for me to try to be a little more specific about the ways in which a group of citizens can obtain counsel and other assistance for their program of bettering the community's service for delinquent children.

I suggest that the committee members first explore the resources right there in agencies, if there is one. This group usually bears the name welfare council, welfare federation, community council, community chest, or the like. Its purpose in most cases

is to act as a pool for all available social knowledge and resources in the community.

Failing a local resource, the group of citizens can go for assistance to the State planning body for children and youth—the group that cooperated with the Midcentury White House Conference. Nearly every State has such an organization, usually appointed by the Governor. The Governor's office can give an interested group the address of this organization. Generally, these planning bodies will be able to put a community group in direct contact with the State agency or voluntary organization that can best serve them.

Any local group or individual that cannot get help or doesn't know where to apply for help in their own State can get that information from the Children's Bureau of the Federal Security Agency in Washington, D. C.

5. *Publicity is the next step in the campaign.* Once the community's need has been well defined—either by general agreement or by survey—the report should be made known to every citizen in the community. Newspapers, mass meetings, radio interviews—these are all accessible to any group.

6. The final stage in the campaign is to *press for action*—wherever and however necessary.

In some instances, a single official may be persuaded to bring about a much needed improvement. A police chief, for example, may agree to assign one or two of his men to work with juveniles, and to inspect public places that may be tending to contribute to delinquency.

Or a group in the community can assume new responsibilities. A private social agency, for example, may accept for treatment cases referred by the juvenile court.

But, quite often, the force of the entire community may be necessary to achieve what seems to be a very simple objective. For example, it took Lehigh County almost twenty years—and talk of mandamus proceedings—to secure a detention home. This was no quick and easy solution.

Indeed, there is seldom any quick

and easy solution or any permanent one. A youth-service facility can deteriorate—quickly or slowly. To assure long and fruitful life, continuing citizen interest is essential.

Perhaps the group that initiated or sponsored the project can transmit its responsibility to some successor organization. But, in the long run, the responsibility for seeing that community services sustain a high level of quality is likely to rest upon the same organizations, the same civic groups, the same individuals that fought for their establishment in the first instance.

In other words, we must be realistic about our community action programs in the field of delinquency. Delinquency springs from social conditions that are deeply imbedded in community life. They cannot be eradicated overnight. But, with constant and patient effort, the public and its officials can be given a better understanding of the dangers of delinquency—and be persuaded to take measures to help children avoid serious maladjustment in their personal and social life.

The newspaperman who started the community effort in Monroe, Mich., has summed up his group's efforts in this clear and forthright way:

"Kids still run wild at times . . . Cops still lecture miscreants and let them go. The new, alert judge still has no place to send kids not quite bad enough for reform school but too tough for foster homes.

"On the other hand, in large part, both the community and officialdom now admit that delinquency *does* exist, and both are doing something, if not all they could, about it. And, gradually, trained personnel is being employed by the agencies dealing with children and youth. Because the community is awake, it is easier now to get official action, whether for a new detention home or increased funds for foster-home care. But the battle must go on . . . Eternal vigilance is the price of civic virtue."

Are not these words both honest and hopeful?

REPRINTS ON JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

A number of recent articles on juvenile delinquency, reprinted from *The Child* and other publications, are available for distribution. Single copies may be had without charge until the supply is exhausted.

Boys and Books Get Together. By Leita P. Craig. Reprint from *The Child*.

Citizens Help a Juvenile Court. By Charles H. Boswell. Reprint from *The Child*.

The Institution as Therapist. By George E. Gardner, Ph.D., M.D. Reprint from *The Child*.

Learning Casework in a Juvenile Probation Setting. By Elliot Studt. Reprinted by permission from *Social Casework*.

A Look at Our Training Schools. By Richard Clendenen. Reprint from *The Child*.

New Horizons for Youth. By Bertram M. Beck. Reprinted by permission from *Ohio Probation*.

Probation Work Requires Special Training. By Clarence M. Leeds. Reprinted by permission from *Federal Probation*.

To Synchronize the Training-school Program With Life in the Community. By Richard Clendenen. Reprint from *The Child*.

Training Schools and the Future. By Richard Clendenen. Reprint from *The Child*.

We Can Do Something About Juvenile Delinquency. By Martha M. Eliot, M.D. Reprint from *The Child*.

Why Does a Young Delinquent Resist Treatment? By Harris B. Peck, M.D. Reprint from *The Child*.

CALENDAR

Dec. 1-2. National Midcentury Committee for Children and Youth. 2-year anniversary conference. With the Advisory Council on State and Local Action; the Advisory Council on Participation of National Organizations and the Federal Interdepartmental Committee on Children and Youth. New York, N. Y.

Dec. 2-4. National Conference on Labor Legislation. 19th annual meeting. Washington, D. C.

Dec. 5-12. International Study Conference, held by the International Union for Child Welfare. Bombay, India. Information from the International Conference of Social Work, 22 West Gay Street, Columbus 15, Ohio.

Dec. 7-8. The Associated Women of the American Farm Bureau Federation. 18th annual convention. Seattle, Wash.

Dec. 8-11. Association of State and Territorial Health Officers. 51st annual meeting. The Association will meet with the Surgeon General of the Public Health Service and the Chief of the Children's Bureau as well as the State Mental Health Authorities and the State Hospital Survey and Construction Authorities. Washington, D. C.

Dec. 9-11. American Farm Bureau Federation. 34th annual meeting. Seattle, Wash.

Dec. 10. Human Rights Day. 4th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Dec. 14-19. International Conference of Social Work. 6th worldwide meeting. Madras, India.

Dec. 27-29. American Economic Association. 65th annual meeting. Chicago, Ill.

Dec. 27-30. American Statistical Association. 112th annual meeting. Chicago, Ill.

Dec. 28-30. American Anthropological Association. Annual meeting. Philadelphia, Pa.

Dec. 29-31. American Association for the Advancement of Science. 119th annual meeting. St. Louis, Mo.

Area conference, National Child Welfare Division, American Legion:

Dec. 4-6. Area E—Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming.

To Our Readers—

We welcome comments and suggestions about *The Child*.

FOCUS

(Continued from page 62)

We need more personnel, and better-trained personnel. This need continues from year to year, despite the fact that if we could somehow offer full and effective services to delinquent children and their families, we could probably prevent development of a major portion of adult criminality.

Aiding one delinquent child to become a good citizen may prevent the spread of delinquency among many other children. Behavior of adolescents is greatly influenced by that of their friends and companions. Improved court services available to delinquent children could reach into the most distressed families in our communities. Study upon study has demonstrated that delinquency most often occurs in a family subject to a variety of social ills. These are families, that though few in number, use up the lion's share of the social services established in any particular community. These are also the families most often shunted from agency

to agency because the depth and severity of their distress makes it difficult for them to be assisted.

It is because of the great gains that may be made by improving services to delinquent children that the Children's Bureau has established its Juvenile Delinquency Branch, which is assisted by a Special Juvenile Delinquency Project, sponsored by the Children's Bureau and financed by private contributions made to the Child Welfare League of America.

The Branch and Project together are trying to stimulate State and local action to improve public services for delinquent children. Improvement of such services is not sought as a substitute for more inclusive measures to prevent maladjustment or to serve children who are not in conflict with the law but who need help.

The antidelinquency program is a small segment of the Children's Bureau's total effort to aid parents in rearing children and to aid children from families that have been unable to give them sufficient care.

Services to delinquent children must be seen as a part in the over-all picture of child-welfare services, but in seeing the whole, we cannot neglect the special needs of groups of children within that whole.

Illustrations:

Cover. Esther Bubley for the Children's Bureau.

Page 51. Courtesy of the Times Picayune Publishing Co., New Orleans, La.

Page 53. Left, posed photograph, courtesy of the Community Service Society of New York. Right, courtesy of the Essex County (N. J.) Parental School.

Page 54. Drawn by Philip Bonn.

Page 55. Left, Palma for Black Star. Right, Philip Bonn for the Children's Bureau.

Page 56. Both by Philip Bonn for the Children's Bureau.

Page 60. Philip Bonn for the Children's Bureau.

Page 61. Arch Hardy for the Federal Security Agency.

Page 66. Courtesy of the Community Service Society of New York.

Page 68. Left, posed photograph, courtesy of the Community Service Society of New York. Right, courtesy of the New York City Housing Authority.

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THE CHILD is read by more than 13,000 professional workers in various fields concerning children, such as social workers, doctors, nurses, nutritionists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, juvenile-court judges, teachers, vocational-guidance workers, school-attendance officers, and health educators.

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